



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 6
1201 ELM STREET, SUITE 500
DALLAS, TEXAS 75270

Office of the Regional Administrator

September 22, 2020

Dr. Chuck Carr Brown, Secretary
Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality
Post Office Box 4314
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70821-4314

RE: Completion of Community Ambient Air Monitoring in the Neighborhoods Surrounding the Denka Performance Elastomer Facility in LaPlace, La.

Dear Dr. Brown,

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) thanks you and your staff for your continued leadership during our community ambient air monitoring program in the neighborhoods surrounding the Denka Performance Elastomer, LLC facility (Denka) in LaPlace, La. over the past four years (2016-2020).

As you are aware, EPA has been working with the community on issues related to air contaminants for many years and has specifically been conducting ambient monitoring for chloroprene at six locations in the community of LaPlace since May of 2016. The goal of this monitoring effort was to gather longer term data about the ambient chloroprene levels in the LaPlace community, and we have met that goal. As part of this effort, we have collected over 2,500 measurements of the chloroprene concentrations in the community. Since March 2018, when Denka implemented chloroprene emission control measures, average concentrations indicate a significant reduction in the level of chloroprene and a downward trend at all monitoring sites. The final community ambient air monitoring samples will be collected on September 26, and EPA will remove the community ambient air monitoring network after the last sample collection. Chloroprene data through August 15, 2020, has been posted to the public website, and additional chloroprene data will be posted as soon as it is available.

In March, EPA began a Continuous Air Monitoring Program to measure short-term concentrations of chloroprene and identify possible unaccounted for sources within the facility. The Continuous Air Monitoring Program is in its Operational Phase and, barring unforeseen circumstances, will operate until December 2020. EPA is posting chloroprene sampling results from the Continuous Air Monitoring Program to the Denka Air Monitoring Data Summary Page: <https://www.epa.gov/la/denka-air-monitoring-data-summary>.

The Continuous Air Monitoring Program was not designed as a replacement for the community ambient air monitoring or to measure long term ambient chloroprene levels. Rather, it is designed to help EPA understand the magnitude and frequency of occasional, but recurring, elevated chloroprene

measurements or “spikes” that contribute to the long-term chloroprene averages. Another objective of the Continuous Air Monitoring Program is to help identify unknown or under-characterized emissions sources or activities at the facility. This continuous monitoring approach may help EPA identify possible actions that Denka could take to further reduce chloroprene in the community.

We appreciate your continued leadership in helping to reduce chloroprene emissions in LaPlace and look forward to continuing working with you. Thank you for your continued work in promoting a healthy and safe environment in the LaPlace community and in the State of Louisiana.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ken McQueen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ken" being more prominent than the last name "McQueen".

Ken McQueen
Regional Administrator